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39. Chronologie comparative. Conditions de la perpétuité de la civilisation. Création du droit. Evolution des idées morales, esthétiques et scientifiques. Théorie ethnologique du progrès. Théorie physiologie.

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GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

A Remarkable New Genus of Giant Sloths.[1]—This memoir describes the skull of a new species of Megatherium-like animal, which Dr. Reinhardt has called *Grypotherium darwinii*, from the pleistocene of the Argentine Republic, and which has been presented to the Museum of Zoölogy of the University of Copenhagen by Dr. V. Lausen, together with a large number of the remains of other animals from the same place. The skull of this Megatheroid is of great interest, for whilst it is unmistakably to be referred to that group of animals, it presents a singularity not found in any other recent or fossil sloth.

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[1] *Beskrivelse af Hovedskallen af et Kæmpedovendyr, Grypotherium darwinii, fra La-plata-Landenes plejstocene Dannelser.* Af. J. Reinhardt. (Ext. Videns. Sels. Skr. 5te Raekke, Naturvidens. og Math. Afd. xii, 4. 4to, pls. ii.) Kjöbenhavn, 1879.

The skull is that of an old animal, as the sutures are almost entirely obliterated. Its length is .610 m. (a little more than two feet), which would make the creature, when alive, intermediate in size between *Megatherium americanum* and *Mylodon robustus*, and therefore belonged to one of the largest forms of the family yet discovered. The most remarkable feature of the cranium, and one which is without a parallel in the family, and hence at once distinguishing it from all allied forms, is the singular structure of the muzzle. The intermaxillary bones are completely coössified (owing, perhaps, partly to the age of the animal), and rise vertically upon the median line in the form of a buttressed bony arch to unite above with the anterior extremity of the nasal bones, which extend forwards beyond the anterior extremities of the maxillaries, resulting in a structure remotely resembling the same parts in *Rhinoceros tichorinus*, and in the absence of an osseous nasal septum, more notably that of *R. merckii*, in which the bony nasal partition is only partially ossified. There is abundant evidence to show that this arch is not a part of the nasals prolonged forward, since there is a suture separating the latter from the intermaxillaries proper. The structure, however, in this animal is not nearly as strong as in *R. merckii*, an explanation of the strength of whose nasal bones is clearly to be sought in the fact that these were surmounted by immense horns which it probably used with great effect; as to whether or not the nasals were armed in *Grypotherium*, there is nothing to indicate, at present at least, that they supported a weapon of any sort.

The presence of the intermaxillary arch undoubtedly entitles Prof. Reinhardt's species to generic rank, in fact there can be little doubt of the propriety of dividing the *Megatheriidæ* provisionally into two new groups, the extinct genera *Mylodon*, *Scelidotherium*, *Megatherium*, *Megalonyx*, *Cœlodon*, being forms typical of—

a. Aphelorhinæ; with unspecialized intermaxillaries.

b. Diarhinæ; with intermaxillaries vertically produced and joined by suture to the anterior extremity of the nasals, and dividing the external nares as in *Grypotherium.*

The intermaxillary arch dividing the external nares, but without an osseous nareal septum, recalls the arrangement of the bones of the muzzle of certain lizards, more particularly those of *Iguana.*

The tooth formulæ of some of the extinct genera may be compared as follows:

Scelidotherium and *Mylodon*.........................	molars	$\frac{5-5}{4-4}$
Grypotherium...	"	$\frac{4-4}{4-4}$
Cœlodon..	"	$\frac{4-4}{3-3}$

forming a series which exhibits very nicely a process of gradual reduction in the number of teeth.—*J. A. Ryder.*

A NEW SPECIES OF CŒLODON.—Prof. Reinhardt's contributions to our knowledge of the poorly known genus *Cœlodon* established in 1839 by Dr. Lund for the reception of a Megatheroid, the remains of which were obtained by the latter author in the bone caves of Brazil, are also noteworthy. The memoir[1] deals with the remains brought by Dr. Lund to Copenhagen, but not fully described and figured by him. The skull in the present paper is well represented, and valuable figures are given of the feet of *Cœlodon escrivanensis*, based on the remains of the young individual found in the last cavern, la Lapa de Escrivania, which Dr. Lund explored in 1844, whilst the name *C. maquinensis* Lund, is retained for the species represented by teeth found in la Lapa nova Maquiné by that explorer in 1835. The *C. escrivanensis* was about the size of the large South American ant-eater (*Myrmecophaga jubata*), and in the opinion of Dr. Reinhardt was most nearly allied to *Mylodon*, and in some respects to the existing arboreal *Cholœpus*. Its habits, the same authority thinks, were arboreal, and he looks forward with much interest to the discovery of an extinct type which seems to us dimly shadowed forth in *Cœlodon*, and which will connect the fossil Megatheroids with the existing species of sloths. To us there is much evidence to show that the history of these animals—their succession in time and their descent—will yet be as completely worked out as that of the horse, dog and camel.—*J. A. Ryder.*

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.[2]

AFRICAN EXPLORATION.—Dr. Rohlfs writes from Djâlo (southeast of the Sella or Zeila oasis), on the 8th of April last, that he left Sokna on the 11th of March. Up to that point the traveler passed over a new route, partly through a desert country, and also through two hitherto unknown oases, Abu-Naïn and Djebbena. This region abounds in fossils of every kind, Ammonites, Echinidæ and others. "There is probably no other district in the world which is equally rich in its extinct marine fauna." Dr. Stöcker has sent home an accurate topographical survey of the Djofra oases on the scale of 1 : 100,000. These three oases, Sokna, Hon and Uadan, are bounded by ranges of hills to the north and south—the highest peak is Gannassa, 2000 feet above the sea-level. Owing to the fanaticism of the natives, Dr. Rohlfs was badly received at Djâlo, and has been unable to procure a guide on account of the unfriendliness of the Bengasine government. Dr. Stöcker has returned to Bengasi to try to favorably

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[1] *Kæmpedovendyr Slægten Cœlodon.* Af J. REINHARDT. (4to, p. 257–349, pls. 7. Ext. Videns. Selsk. Skr. 5te Raekke, Naturvidensk. og Mathem. Afd. XII, 3.) Copenhagen, 1878.

[2] Edited by ELLIS H. YARNALL, Philadelphia.